

and, though her hands trembled, she still proceeded in the composition of the spiced comforts which her lady had come to overlook.

"Oh! my poor Amy! And is this true? Can men really be so false?"

"Indeed, can they, madam. And I am not the first girl who has been slighted; they all tell us so!" But I always held myself high; and it is no comfort to hear how, when his wedding morning came, Donald McRae was nowhere to be found; or how Jackie Smith deserted—Kate Armstrong, after he had broken a gold piece with her; or how Mary Morrison pined herself to death for the loss of Jamie Elliot. But I am not one to pine myself to death! David's wife shall never hear that Amy Evans had so mean a spirit; no, she shall hear of me cheerful and contented, madam. And why should I not be so; when I have such a good, kind lady, whom I love better—ay, better than I once did David himself! And now the tears streamed fast from her eyes, which nature seemed to have intended should only express sprightliness and warm affection. "But, I beseech you, madam, speak not to Jean Scott or to Annie Bell of my griefs!" They have never yet seen me weep, and I would not have them know that David's falsehood had wrung tears from me. I shall not feel it so much after a while, my lady! And when all is said and done, where could I ever be so happy as with my kind, my honored mistress? So you will never say anything more, my lady, of making Jean Scott your 'trewoman'?"

"Oh, no! dear Amy; I should never, never like any one about me so well as you!"

"I thought so, my lady; and I told Jean Scott I was sure you would never turn me off, though she prides herself so upon her taste, and the nimbleness of her fingers, and is always throwing out that the time will come when she will have my place!" And Amy was half comforted for the loss of David, when she had ascertained that she had the same hold on her mistress's affections. Since the blight which had fallen on her first and early love, she valued the favor of her lady above all other earthly goods, and watched over it with the jealous tenderness of a lover.

Her secluded education, and her own early marriage to so honorable a man, had prevented the Countess of Nithsdale having ever witnessed, much more having ever experienced, the caprice and infidelities of the other sex. She had heard and read of them, as of matters undoubtedly true, but never likely to come under her own immediate cognizance; and she was astonished at Amy's treating a lover's desertion of his mistress as an event of common occurrence. She wondered still more that pride should, in a low-born country maiden's heart, almost over-balance the more instinctive feeling of love. That a noble damsel should resent any slight, was indispensable to her birth and breeding; and the proud blood of the Herberts mantled in her cheeks at the mere imagining such a case. But she thought, had she been lowly born, pride could never have sustained her under so cruel a blow.—She forgot that, in all ranks alike, each feels the eye of his equals upon him,—that the lowest, as well as the highest, have their world, before whom to blush is degradation.

It was not that the gentle Lady Nithsdale was haughty in her nature; the affection which subsisted between herself and Amy sufficiently proved the contrary; but as she was imbued with the divine indefeasible right of kings, so was she with the innate inherent nobility of an ancient family.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

LITTLE CATECHISM ON THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE SOVEREIGN PONTIFF

DESIGNED TO AID IN THE COMPREHENSION OF THE DOGMA.

(Continued from last week.)

III.

WHAT ARE WE TO UNDERSTAND BY INFALLIBILITY IN MATTERS OF FAITH AND MORALS.

1. I should now like to know more precisely in what matters the Pope is infallible?

As has been already said he is infallible in matters of faith and of morals. In the same manner in which it has always been said that the Church is infallible in her teaching as to faith and morals, in precisely the same sense do we say that the Pope is infallible.

2. Yes, but in using terms of so wide a signification as "faith" and "morals," does not one run the risk of so far extending the infallibility of the Pope and the Church as to carry it beyond its proper sphere?

That assistance of the Holy Spirit which produces infallibility, will also render it impossible that it should ever stray beyond its proper sphere, which would indeed be the greatest of errors. What kind of infallibility would that be which could be so far mistaken as to decide more than it ought to decide? What sort of an infallible doctor would he who should be unable to discern the subjects to which his competency extended from those which lay not within its limits, or who, discerning it, still should arrogate to himself an authority he did not possess?

The teaching of the Church has always kept within the limits of faith and morals; here fact could never be opposed to right.

3. Let us see how the Church and the Popes have understood and exercised this divine authority in their teaching?

Their teaching has embraced everything that we ought to believe or practice to gain eternal life. First of all, the articles of faith are expressly revealed; then are explained those truths which are more or less connected with Christian faith and morality and, consequently, with eternal salvation. Thus then, both in fact and in right, it belongs to the doctrinal authority of the Church or of the Pope (for they are one and the same), to condemn not only declared heresies, but also such errors as regard more or less faith and morality. Consequently this authority can condemn books, propositions, opinions which would pass for scientific, educational maxims, political principles, etc., in opposition to faith and morality; it can reprove as illicit or immoral certain sects or societies, and on the contrary, approve as good and pious certain religious orders; it can judge of the reality of the virtues of individuals and canonize saints; it can admit or reject certain doctrines which touch the general welfare, the rights or discipline of the Church of Jesus Christ.

All this has direct connection with the faith and morals, and consequently falls under the infallible authority of the Church or of the Pope.

4. But who is it that so explains this authority as to give it so wide a range?

The Church herself, by her acts. Is it not certain that the Church, and the Popes, have believed themselves authorized to pronounce upon all these subjects a judgment of infallible truth, and consequently, an irrefragable sentence which demands the submission of all the faithful? If the Pope have defined any matter, in his character of universal master of the Church then the Pope spoke aided by the Holy Spirit; therefore he could not have exceeded the limits of his authority; the points which he defined all have some connection with revealed truths, with faith or with morals.

5. But there may be some who do not see this connection?

If there be any one who fails to see this relation, which is, nevertheless, easy to discern, let him attribute the fault to the weakness of his judgment,

not to the Pope. Otherwise the reproach would fall on the Holy Spirit, who had not rightly guided the Pope! Far from saying the Pope speaks of what does not concern him, let such people look to themselves and see that they do not speak on matters of which they know nothing. How many ignorant people at the present day talk theology and pretend to teach the Pope himself.

6. It would seem, though, that the Pope wishes to encroach upon the free soil of science and reason. In such a case, would he not expose himself to the danger of striking into a false path and falling into error?

It is rather science, and, reason, that, intruding into the domain of religion, faith and morals, stumble against some one or other of the dogmas of the Church. Then the Pope cries: "Back, rash intruders, withdraw!" Therefore, in condemning the errors of reason and pretended science, he remains at his post on the ground of religion.

7. But what is said of the Pope entering into the domain of politics, under the pretext of exercising his infallible authority? Is not the political world independent?

Independent even of God, morality, of justice? Such a political domain would be extraordinary indeed! The Pope exercises, with regard to nations and governments, the same rights as with regard to individuals; he can teach them morality, condemn false principles, even political ones, as well as the erroneous maxims of modern society, whenever any of these touch religion, that is faith, and morals.

8. With this infallibility may not the Pope then, some day, pronounce sentence of deposition against a sovereign, abolish his subjects from their allegiance, and plunge us again into the middle ages?

This is but a vain fear. It confounds circumstances and epochs the most dissimilar. Infallibility has nothing to do with the deposition of sovereigns.

It was the papal authority and not papal infallibility that was involved in certain spiritual acts, such as excommunication, which produced civil and political effects, admitted and recognized by princes and people; such acts of authority become a part of the public law of Christian society; but papal infallibility was not concerned in them. Infallibility, that is authority in teaching, is one thing, and supreme authority in governing is another, and quite a different thing. The Pope's infallibility is always the same; his authority, though in substance always the same likewise, depends on time and circumstances for its applications, its form, its extension and its civil and political effects.

Those, then, who raise against the infallibility these political objections, confound errors and events that are quite different; they do so intentionally, to confuse the question and render infallibility odious to modern society. But so society may be at rest; the Popes of our time are not thinking of deposing princes. It is the secret societies and the revolutionaries who have taken that affair in hand, aided by what they call the sovereignty of the people. We will pursue no further a question which would lead us beyond our subject. In truth, after a Catechism on the Infallibility we would need another on the authority of the Pope, a question which, in our days, has called forth so much reasoning and such want of all reason.

[CONCLUSION NEXT WEEK.]

"A MIRACLE IS IMPOSSIBLE."

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE OF MODERN PROTESTANT DISCUSSION.—FATHER JOHN H. NEWMAN ON RELICS AND MIRACLES.

I suppose there is nothing which prejudices us more in the minds of Protestants of all classes than our belief in the miracles wrought by the relics and the prayers of the Saints. They inspect our churches, or they attend to our devotions, or they hear our sermons, or they open our books, or they read paragraphs in the newspapers, and it's one and the same story—relics and miracles. Such a belief, such a claim, they consider a self-evident absurdity, they are too indignant even to laugh; they toss the book from them in the fulness of anger and contempt, and they think it superfluous to make one remark in order to convict us of audacious imposture, and to fix upon us the brand of indelible shame. I shall show, then, that this strong feeling arises simply from their assumption of a First Principle, which ought to be proved, if they would be honest reasoners, before it is used to our disadvantage.

You observe, we are now upon a certain question of controversy, in which the argument is not directly about fact. . . . We accuse our enemies of untruth in most cases; we do not accuse them, on the whole, of untruth here. I know it is very difficult for prejudice such as theirs to open its mouth at all without some misstatement or exaggeration; still, on the whole, they do bear true, do not false witness, in the matter of miracles. We do certainly abound, we are exuberant, we overflow, with stories which cause our enemies, from no fault of ours; the keenest irritation, and kindle in them the most lively resentment against us. Certainly the Catholic Church, from east to west, from north to south is, according to our conceptions, bung with miracles. The store of relics is inexhaustible; they are multiplied through all lands, and each particle of each has in it at last a dormant, perhaps an energetic virtue, of supernatural operation. At Rome there is the true cross, the crib of Bethlehem, and the chair of Peter; portions of the crown of thorns are kept at Paris; the holy coat at Treves; the winding-sheet at Turin; at Monza, the iron crown is formed out of a nail of the Cross; and another nail is claimed for the Duomo of Milan; and pieces of our Lady's habit are to be seen in the Escorial. The Agnus Dei, blessed medals, the scapular, the cord of St. Francis, all are the medium of Divine manifestations and graces. Crucifixes have bowed the head to the suppliant, and Madonnas have bent their eyes on assembled crowds. St. Januarius' blood liquifies periodically at Naples, and St. Winifred's well is the scene of wonders even in our unbelieving country. Women are marked with the sacred stigmata, blood has flowed on Fridays from their five wounds, and their heads are crowned with a circle of lacerations. Relics are ever touching the sick, the diseased, the wounded; sometimes with no result at all, at other times with marked and undeniable efficacy. Who has not heard of the abundant favors gained by the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, and of the marvellous consequences which have attended the invocation of St. Anthony of Padua? The phenomena are sometimes reported of saints in their lifetime, as well as after their death, especially if they were evangelists or martyrs. The wild beasts crouched before their victims in the Roman amphitheatre; the axe-man was unable to sever St. Cecilia's head from her body; and St. Peter elicited a spring of water for his jailer's baptism in the Mamertine. St. Francis Xavier turned salt water into fresh for five hundred travellers; St. Raymond was transported over the sea on his cloak, St. Andrew shone brightly in the dark; St. Paul was fed by ravens; and St. Francis saw her Guardian angel. I need not continue the catalogue; here one party urges, the other admits; they join issue over a fact; that is the claim of miracles on the part of the Catholic Church; it is the Protestants' charge, and it is our glory.

Observe, then, we affirm that the Supreme Being has wrought miracles on earth since the time of the Apostles. Protestants deny it. Why do we affirm? Why do they deny? We affirm it on a First Principle; they deny it on a First Principle; and on either side the First Principle is made to be decisive of the Question. . . . Both they and we start

with the miracles of the Apostles, and then their First Principle, or presumption against our miracles, is, "What God did once, He is not likely to do again." They say: "It cannot be supposed He will work many miracles;" we: "It cannot be supposed that He will work few." The two parties, you see, start with contradictory principles, and they determine the particular miracles which are the subject of dispute by their respective principles, without looking to such a testimony as may be brought in their favor. They do not say, "St. Francis, or St. Anthony, or St. Philip Neri, did no miracles, for the evidence of them is worth nothing;" or "because what looked like a miracle, was not a miracle;" no; but they say: "It is impossible they should have wrought miracles." Bring before the Protestants the largest mass of evidence, and testimony in proof of the miraculous liquification of St. Januarius' blood at Naples, let him be urged by witnesses of the highest character, chemists of the first fame, circumstances the most favorable for the detection of imposture, coincidences and confirmations the most close, and minute; and indirect, he will not believe it; his First Principle blocks belief. . . . He laughs at the very idea of miracles or supernatural acts, as occurring at this present day; he laughs at the notion of evidence for them; one is just as likely as another, they are all false. Why? Because of his First Principle: there are no miracles since the Apostles.

* I am urging with Protestants; if unbelievers are supposed, then they generally use Hume's celebrated argument, which still is a presumption of First Principle, viz., it is impossible to fancy the order of nature interrupted.

A SENSIBLE AGITATION.

THE ANTI-MASONIC MOVEMENT IN IRELAND.—PERSECUTION OF CATHOLICS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE.

Ireland has many unredressed grievances, some of which can hardly be dealt with directly by legislative enactments. Her Catholics make some resistance to political oppression, if it goes too far, but their resistance to the terrible social tyranny of the minority, as exercised through the bureaucracy and the Masonic Society, has never been very active. We are glad, therefore, to observe by the following letter in the Belfast Examiner that the Northeastern men are awakening to a sense of their possession of the instruments of justice in their power to organize and to vote. Over the signature of "A North-east Catholic" we find the following:

"The Ulster Catholic Registration Society will beyond doubt, have the best wishes of the vast majority of the Catholics of this province. It need not be denied; however, that some Catholics will be found lukewarm, and others hostile to the movement. Indeed, there is some difficulty for Catholics in choosing a side in these days when it is an established fact that many of the Liberal ranks are degenerate sons of men whose liberality had the right ring about it in past times, and modern Conservatives have grown more tolerant than their Tory progenitors. Since the era of 'Catholic Emancipation' the tendency of Liberal Protestants has been to act towards their Catholic countrymen as if the intolerant suspicions of old Toryism had a veritable foundation, while there is a marked difference between the actions of the old Brunswickers and modern Conservatives. Truth compels me to affirm that there is to be found in the ranks of both a greater preponderance of feeling hostile to Catholic rights—political and social—than is justifiable by the conduct of the Catholic people of Ireland.

Secret societies are fostered by the gentry and clergy in many of the Protestant communities with the object of excluding Catholics from political and social rights.

The conduct of the clergy of the "Church without spot or wrinkle," and of the faithful laity of that Church, contrasts favorably with that of the Protestant churches. No doubt, there was a secret society in existence among the lay Catholics, but it never had the countenance of the bishops or priests. That society had its origin in defence, when Catholics were in terror of attack in going to fairs and markets. It is worthy of note that the writer was acquainted with the man who first instituted a Ribbon society. Its first intention was purely defensive—a fact which was attested by the late Sharn Crawford before a committee of the British House of Commons. As might be expected, the society grew into a stage beyond being defensive, and called forth the hatred of the landed proprietors which hatred became embodied in legislation for its suppression. That legislation, however, was preceded by the condemnation of the Catholic hierarchy, aided by the powerful agency of the emancipator of Catholic Ireland.

Freemasonry is considered by many people a harmless form of an oath-bound secret society. Its utility is held up on account of the benevolent aid rendered to members in distress, no matter what creed. Spectious and delusive fustian!

Has Christianity been proven a failure when secret societies must be organized to teach men to "do to others as they would that men should do to them?" or has the example of the "Good Samaritan" failed to let men know who is their "neighbor?" Pure Christianity does not require the proofs of secret society, as its sacred maxims are in themselves grand principles of action and heaven-born philosophy. Neither has genuine liberality any foundation so secure as that which flows from the practical application of the injunction of the Gospel and the teachings of the Church. This is the unmixt liberality which is in harmony with the Divine will, the pure source of all truth.

It is well known, besides, that Masonry is not the harmless dove its votaries represent it to be. It has been implicated in the acts of the Carbonari in Italy, and the wild horrors of the impious Commune in Paris. It is the friend of the revolution and the foe of religion. It is notorious, too, that the most lucrative offices in the gift of the State are given to the member of the Masonic Society, and that the Civil Service is crammed with them. What chance, then, has a Catholic of preferment when the heads of the official departments are members of the craft? Of late Orangemen have ceased to have a monopoly of the public offices, but, by becoming Masons as well as Orangemen, they can still, to a large extent, maintain their nominally lost position.

What, then, is the paramount duty of the Catholic Registration Society? Clearly to ostracize Masonry; to make that the leading feature of the organization; to withhold their support from all Parliament candidates, civil officers, and Poor Law Guardians who belong to Masonry, however great their personal worth, or whatever may be the tinge of their religious or political creed.

Let the Catholics of Ulster set the example; let it be followed by the other provinces, and an easy victory will be obtained, not less important in its social consequences than any of the Parliamentary advantages yet gained by the people of Ireland. For my part, I would, if compelled to make choice prefer a pure Orangeman to one who was a Mason, or a mixture of both.

I would not advocate the principle of giving places of honor and trust exclusively to Catholics. The Catholics of Ireland have always shown good example on this subject, but surely urgent self-defence is not to be confounded with bigoted sectarianism.

There is a probability of Sir Archibald Alison's autobiography seeing the light shortly. It contains keen and discriminating criticisms on many of the historian's literary and political contemporaries.

NOW.

Rise! for the day is passing,
And you lie dreaming on;
The others have buckled their armor,
And forth to the fight have gone;
A place in the ranks await you,
Each man has some part to play;
The Past and the future are nothing,
In the face of the stern To-day.

Rise for your dreams of the future,
Of gaining some hard-fought field;
Of storming some airy fortress,
Or bidding some giant yield;
Your future has deeds of glory,
Of home (God grant it may)
But your aim will never be stronger,
Or the need so great as To-day.

Rise! if the Past detains you,
Her sunshine and storms forget;
No chains so unworthy to hold you,
As those of a vain regret;
Sad or bright, she is lifeless forever,
Cast her phantoms arms away,
Nor look back, save to learn the lesson,
Of a nobler strife To-day.

Rise! for the day is passing;
The low sound that you scarcely hear
Is the enemy marching to battle—
Arise! for the foe is here!
Stay not to sharpen your weapons,
Or the hour will strike at last,
When, from dreams of a coming battle,
You may wake to find it past!

ADELAIDE PROCTOR.

ANOTHER WONDERFUL CURE AT LOURDES.

RELATED BY THE ATTENDING PHYSICIAN.—MEDICAL SERVICE, MINES OF BEAUBRUN.—REPORT OF JANUARY 12, 1876.

(From the Echo de Fourviere.)

"I the undersigned, Anthony Marie Chetail, Doctor in Medicine of the Faculty of Paris, Physician of the Benevolent Society, and Vaccinator for the City of Saint-Etienne (Loire), testify to the exactitude and to the truth of the following medical observation.

"Twelve years since, I was called to the family of good and honest operatives, dwelling in the city to attend a young girl, aged fifteen and a half years, whose feeble health and interesting position inspired all with compassion. Upon seeing her for the first time, I was at once surprised at the extraordinary dimensions of her stomach. To my questions, the maiden replied with calmness and modesty, that she was wholly ignorant as to the cause of the malady, that she had merely perceived her stomach for a long time gradually increasing in size, day by day, though wholly unaccompanied by pain. A slight examination convinced me that she was dropsical.

"I tapped her, and drew from her about 15 litres of clear water, somewhat of the color of milk, but inodorous. The stomach being thus reduced to its normal state, I examined the abdomen, trusting to discover within its cavity the cause of this singular affection; but could succeed in finding nothing.

"This certitude arrived at, I attributed this affection to anemia. Thereupon I ordered for my interesting patient a strengthening regime, and prescribed fortifying and restorative remedies, advising at the same time diuretics as preventive medicines.

"The patient was tapped eleven times. The last five times I drew off no less than from twenty to twenty-two litres of liquid, always of the same milky hue. I was absent at the time of the twelfth operation, which was performed by one of my colleagues, to whose care I had specially recommended the sick girl, advising at the same time the cure by compression. Some time subsequently, I again saw my patient and urged her to essay this latter system of cure. But those measures, as well as all those I had previously adopted were productive of no favorable results.

"Meanwhile the pious girl had vowed herself to the Blessed Virgin. At that time were inaugurated the Pilgrimages from Saint-Etienne to Lourdes. Annette Montagnon, inspired by faith, desired to take part therein. Her infirmities, the length of the journey, the fatigue and privations incident thereto, could not deter her; she accompanied both of the Pilgrimages, and in each of them her faith and her confidence in the Mother of the Afflicted appeared ever to augment. She constantly repeated: 'Our Lady of Lourdes will surely cure me.' She was in this sweet state of hope, true inspiration from heaven, when, on January 1, 1875, she awoke perfectly healed.

"To complete my investigation I sought to learn from the very lips of Annette Montagnon how and in what manner this marvellous prodigy was wrought within her.

"I had read, she said to me, 'an account of a young religious affected with the like malady with my own, who was suddenly cured at the close of a Novena of the Blessed Virgin. Always fully hopeful of my cure, I began a Novena towards the Feast of Christmas, 1874. The last day of the year I had a fall in the street, some charitable persons raised me and conveyed me to my dwelling; I being so badly bruised as to be incapable of rising unassisted. I suffered greatly throughout the day, eating nothing, as the very odor of food nauseated me, and I felt wholly unstrung. Worn out with pain, I fell upon my knees, and weeping bitterly, exclaimed: 'Holy Virgin, look down upon my misery; all know how much I love you; your glory is at stake! Cure me, O Immaculate Virgin of Lourdes!'

"My mother raised me and placed me in my bed. I begged her to apply upon my stomach a handkerchief wetted with the water of the miraculous fountain.

"I fell asleep almost instantly. My mother, who had resolved to watch beside me during the night, seeing me so tranquil, lay down to sleep beside me. Upon awakening in the morning, it seemed to me that I had slept an entire day. I felt no pain whatever, and I perceived that my stomach was perfectly dry; I stepped to the floor; my mother had as yet perceived nothing. I cried out: 'I am cured! and I will forthwith go to the Church to have celebrated a Mass of thanksgiving. I was effectively cured.'

"You remember," she said to me, 'how greatly I suffered after each of the operations made upon me, and what precautions you would take to keep my stomach in its proper position. You are also well aware that my ribs, crushed backward by the volume of liquid, were painfully recruited on all sides. Well, after my awakening, I felt that my ribs were insensibly drawing together, and resuming their natural position without causing me any pain. My stomach returned to its place, and became as I had never seen it, and as it is at present. I likewise felt something, as it were, gently descending from my breast into my abdomen (it was the stomach returning to its normal position). All this occurred without any suffering. The morning of Jan. 2, when I reached the store, I was so agile and active that my companions, surprised to see me so completely cured, shouted—weeping for joy—'miracle! miracle!'

"I fully believe the truth of the recital of this young girl; I have faith in her faith. And truly, who could explain the atrocious sufferings almost instantaneously arrested by the application of a handkerchief dipped in the Water of Lourdes, and the calm, profound slumber following? Who will

tell me whither it went, leaving no trace of itself, that immense volume of water on that blessed night? And the abdomen and the ribs, which resumed their normal state? And the stomach, forced into the diaphragm, which likewise regains its natural position. All this in the space of twenty-four hours! No, men can never explain these wonders of Providence. Consequently, I declare, and am delighted to be able to affirm, that Annette Montagnon was cured through the potent intervention of the Mother of God, Our Lady of Lourdes. God be praised!

A. M. CHETAIL.
Physician to the Mines of Beaubrun, and to the Hospital of St. John Bonnefond.
Vise for the legality of the signature of Dr. Chetail.
Saint Etienne, Jan. 18, 1876.
For the Mayor,
C. Cross, Adjunct.
"I had in my employ, as an operative, Annette Montagnon. She was in a state of terrifying retardity at the epoch of her second Pilgrimage to Lourdes. I was astounded as well as all the personnel of my establishment, to behold her instantaneous cure; all wept with joy. This I have pleasure to affirm.
PERRICHON-PARADIS.
Saint Etienne, Jan. 18, 1876."

THE MORALITY OF THE GODLESS.

The tendency of the present age is to indifference; or, to speak more properly, to atheism. There was a time when fanaticism was the ruling passion of the world—when the Church was compelled to combat such zealots as Calvin and Knox. . . . But as this spirit was, I prefer it to the present heedless, indifferent one of to-day. How often do we hear it said: "I believe in no religion, yet I am an honest and moral man. What is the necessity of a God? I can be morally true and good without believing in or fearing Him."

My purpose is to prove that it is utterly impossible for the Godless or the atheistical to be moral in any sense of the term. Without God there can be no morality, and, consequently, no society. And first, there may be a standard of morality fixed and infallible. To act ill or well man must know that which he does; and to this end there must be some unchangeable distinguishing good from evil. Every soul born in this world possesses this rule within itself. We call it conscience. Conscience is not the absolute law of the law-giver of morality; it is merely the echo of another's voice—the tablet upon which the law has been engraved by the finger of Omnipotence. These eternal precepts, "Be just," "be true," "be honest," are common to the whole human race. They have existed and will exist always; we conceive them as remaining after the annihilation of humanity; they are necessary and unchangeable; they cannot be founded in a contingent and changeable being; hence their origin is in God, the only necessary and immutable being. Eliminate Him, and what standard of morality remains?

"Reason shall be our guide," answers the atheist. What does he understand by reason? The word is taken in various acceptations, usually as the faculty of intelligently knowing and understanding. That is, morality in his case is conformity to what is known or understood. But as this knowledge is infinite, varied, and may be applied in a thousand directions, he is still without a moral standard, man may commit what actions he chooses and still they will conform to his knowledge, be approved by his understanding. In fact, wicked, designing men make more use of their reason than do those who guide themselves by the standard of morality. What is morality? Defined shortly, conformity to the moral law. Law, with which there is no obligation, implies the idea of a superior. Our reason is not our superior; can we be superior to ourselves? It is foolish to argue, that the intellect which prejudice may sway, interest deceive or passion overwhelm, will thus dictate and enforce to itself the oftentimes distasteful code of ethics.

Honor is the guiding star of other Godless men, a veritable will-o'-the-wisp, leading them into all contradiction and absurdity. If by honor is meant the homage that the good pay to virtue, we argue to no purpose. For who without some unerring guide will venture to affirm what is virtue and what is vice? If this term signify the fluctuating tide of public opinion, the same difficulty arises. What is right once must be right always—it cannot change with every popular whim. By substituting as a rule of morality the will of the people for the unchangeable ways of God, we destroy all order and lean indeed upon a broken reed. For instance, no one doubts that duelling is immoral, yet for centuries it was approved by the universal popular voice; honor, it was said, sanctioned the practice. If, then, this so-called honor is to be the rule of life, its disciples must approve the duel, now condemned by all thinking men. In like manner, by thus making the caprice of the hour the rule of action, many a pernicious a practice would be introduced and elevated as a virtue.

Without God there can be no rights. All men naturally possess the rights of personal liberty, personal property and personal security. Substitute the will of the majority for the voice of God, which commands respect to these rights; what will be the result? Take the right of property, for example. The godless majority cease to regard this right; they legislate it away and command a division of all property. This is the natural result of the atheistic doctrine. That it is no mere imaginative theory the history of our own times proves. Observe the Commune of Paris. Its leaders and members professed entire disbelief in the Almighty; priests were referred to as people calling themselves servants of a person named God. The multitude at once ceased to regard any rights; they clamored for the enforcement of the socialistic doctrine—all property in common. The end was civil war, a burned city, hostages murdered, innocent citizens slaughtered, the embers of a great capital quenched in the blood of its defenders. It is useless to say that this is an extreme, an exceptional case; these consequences follow the godless theory as inevitably as night follows day. Take God from the people, and you destroy all rights whatever, however dead or sacred, and work the sure destruction of all civil society. As there are no rights, so there can be no duties. These are reciprocal. The right to command implies the duty to obey, and so with others. All duties depend upon rights; destroy the latter, you demolish the foundation of duty, which consequently cannot exist.

A powerful incentive to virtue is the hope of reward, the fear of punishment; to the atheist there is no such inducement to follow the dictates of conscience. Now, a reward is offered to him who fulfills all the laws of morality; it is the possession of God Himself. Without the prospect of some reward, temporal or eternal, or checked by the fear of certain punishment, men will not mortify their passions or restrain their appetites. If, for a striking instance, a politician can steal a million dollars without fear of detection, will the beauty of an abstract principle restrain him? Yet it often happens if man cannot be induced, he may be forced not to violate the precepts of morality. What authority can enforce the observances of these ethical rules? The civil authority, its laws and ministers, would be themselves corrupted, and we cannot expect that the immoral will punish immorality. Will Satan rebuke sin?

Shame will not prevent crime, for when immorality is practiced by all, the criminal is shameless. Even to-day this fact is evident, that when corruption is widely spread the wicked suffer no obloquy.